whether necessary amendments to APMC Act have been carried out, in order to notify the reforming States for applicability of the Scheme. Reply from the States is awaited. As such, no assistance under the Scheme has been provided to States so far.

Timings of Kathgodam and New Delhi Sampark Kranti Express

1592. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that passengers from hilly areas of Uttaranchal are left standard and are unable to use the Sampark Kranti Express between Kathgodam and Delhi, as it arrives and departs from Kathgodam at 10.45 P.M. and 8.50 A.M. respectively, and the State Government has banned public transport on hills during night;

(b) if so, whether Government would change the departure timing of the train to 4 P.M. from Kathgodam and 9 A.M. from Delhi; and

(c) whether Government propose a link train from Ramnagar be connected with this train similar to the Ranikhet Express to benefit people of Garhwal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Rescheduling of 5035/5036 Kathgodam-Delhi Uttaranchal Sampark Kranti Express has been examined but not found feasible due to severe operational constraints.

(c) No, Sir.

Subsidy *vis-a-vis* Interest of Farmers

†1593. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the statement made by the Planning Commission wherein it has been said "The key for the development of Agriculture is to increase the capital investment and not to give subsidy";

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that developed western countries are giving annual subsidy in terms of billions of dollars to their agricultural producers; and

(d) if so, what arrangements will be made to safeguard the interests of Indian farmers in international market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) No official statement to the effect that "The key for the development of agriculture is to increase the capital investment and not to give subsidy" has been made by Planning Commission.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) It is true that the developed countries continue to provide large amounts of subsidy to their agricultural producers. In order to protect farmers in developing countries, in the ongoing negotiations on the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the developing countries, including India, have demanded elimination of policies involving heavy farm subsidies pursued by developed countries. The negotiations are still continuing.

Rice scam

1594. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of rice scam in Karnataka;

(b) the quantity of rice involved and misused which was meant for Food for Work Programme;

(c) whether an enquiry by CBI is being ordered/contemplated; and

(d) whether similar scams occurred in other States in the country; if so, the details threof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.